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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/802,771	03/18/2004	Youichi Tobita	70456-022	4674

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EXAMINER

NGUYEN, JIMMY H

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2629

DATE MAILED: 11/30/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:

Group A: Claims 1-11, drawn to a digital/analog conversion device, classified in class 341, subclass 144.

Group B: Claims 12-20, drawn to a display device displaying a gray level, classified in class 345, subclass 690.

2. The inventions are independent or distinct, each from the other because:

Inventions of groups A and B are related as subcombination and combination. Inventions in this relationship are distinct if it can be shown that (1) the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed for patentability, and (2) that the subcombination has utility by itself or in other combinations (MPEP § 806.05(c)). In the instant case, the combination (Group A) as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination (Group B) as claimed because the display device (of group B) as claimed does not require a particular charge pump circuit of the subcombination (group A), in order to display a gray level image. The subcombination (Group A) has separate utility such as circuits included in the pulse number control circuit (e.g., see claim 2), functionalities of a precharge circuit (e.g., see claims 3-5), particular elements included in the bias circuit (see claims 6-9), and etc. (see claims 10 and 11).

3. Because these inventions are independent or distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art in view of their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

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4. Because these inventions are independent or distinct for the reasons given above and the inventions require a different field of search (see MPEP § 808.02), restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

Election of Species

5. Note that since this application contains claims directed to the following patentably distinct species of the claimed invention, if the Applicants elect Group A, Applicants are further required to elect one of the following species:

Species IA, as illustrated in figures 1-6;

Species IIA, as illustrated in figures 7 and 8;

Species IIIA, as illustrated in figures 9 and 10;

Species IVA, as illustrated in figure 11;

Species VA, as illustrated in figures 12 and 13;

Species VIA, as illustrated in figures 14 and 15; and

Species VIIA, as illustrated in figure 16;

and if the Applicants elect Group B, Applicants are further required to elect one of the following species:

Species IB, as illustrated in figures 17 and 19-22;

Species IIB, as illustrated in figure 18;

Species IIIB, as illustrated in figures 23 and 24; and

Species IVB, as illustrated in figures 25 and 26.

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6. Applicant is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 to elect a single disclosed species for prosecution on the merits to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. Currently, there is no generic claim in either of Group A or Group B.

7. Applicant is advised that a reply to this requirement must include an identification of the species that is elected consonant with this requirement, and a listing of all claims readable thereon, including any claims subsequently added. An argument that a claim is allowable or that all claims are generic is considered nonresponsive unless accompanied by an election.

The election of an invention or species may be made with or without traverse. To reserve a right to petition, the election must be made with traverse. If the reply does not distinctly and specifically point out supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election shall be treated as an election without traverse.

Upon the allowance of a generic claim, applicant will be entitled to consideration of claims to additional species which are written in dependent form or otherwise include all the limitations of an allowed generic claim as provided by 37 CFR 1.141. If claims are added after the election, applicant must indicate which are readable upon the elected species. MPEP § 809.02(a).

Should applicant traverse on the ground that the species are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record showing the species to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions unpatentable over the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) of the other invention.

Conclusion

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8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jimmy H. Nguyen whose telephone number is 571-272-7675.

The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Thursday, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Bipin Shalwala can be reached at 571-272-7681. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

JHN
November 20, 2006



Jimmy H. Nguyen
Primary Examiner
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